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This study was conducted to determine the prevalent practices of selected institutions of higher education concerning student membership on academic committees, and on certain other governing groups. Questionnaires were sent to 85 institutions and 59 were returned and analyzed. More than 85% of those that replied indicated that students serve on one or more academic committees, and almost half reported that students also serve on other governing groups. Students are most often involved on committees concerned with the admissions and financial aid programs, curriculum, library, calendar, and guidance programs of the university. Almost 60% of the institutions reported that student committee members are elected by the student body. The general trend regarding qualifications is the requirement that a student be a full-time undergraduate, and an upperclassman. Student participation is generally successful, as 43 of 52 institutions reported that student contributions were "moderate" or "substantial." Approximately 90% of the institutions indicated that student membership on academic committees was initiated at their schools after 1960. Tables document responses to the questionnaires and appendices include a copy of the questionnaire and names of the institutions to which they were sent. (DS)

ED032855

A Survey of Practices Related to Student Membership on Academic Committees

By the

Office of Institutional Research
John B. Davis, Jr. Director

For the

Faculty Senate Committee on Committees

East Carolina University

February, 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Purpose

This study was conducted to determine the prevalent practices of selected institutions of higher education concerning student membership on academic committees, and on certain other university governing bodies.

Procedure

On November 20, 1968, a questionnaire was forwarded to 85 institutions of higher education, with a request that the completed instrument be returned by December 12, 1968. Institutions on the mailing list were selected from a list of universities and colleges within the United States, based on their geographical location and on their status as to private or public control. (A list of the institutions is included in Appendix A).

The questionnaire contained six sections, each composed of items designed to solicit responses from the institutions relevant to their practices concerning student membership on academic committees, and on certain other university/college bodies. Items on the questionnaire were addressed to the topics of institutional practice as to student membership on academic committees in general, student membership on specific academic committees (number of students on varying committees, voting or non-voting status), student membership on other institutional bodies, qualification for students who serve on academic committees, method of selection of students for service on academic committees, and evaluation of student membership on academic committees. Provision was also made for general comments on the practice of students serving on academic committees.

By January 30, 1969, fifty-nine of the 85 questionnaires (69.4%) had been returned. An analysis of the data from the returned questionnaires provided information on prevalent practices relative to student membership on academic committees.

Findings

General:-The results of the analysis of the data from the questionnaires indicated that, of the 59 institutions replying to the questionnaire, 52 (88.1%) reported student membership on some academic committee. Forty-five (76.2%) of the 59 institutions reported that students held voting memberships on these committees. Thirty-eight (64.4%) of the schools replying reported student voting participation on at least two committees, and 26 of the 59 institutions (44%) indicated that students were voting members on at least 3 academic committees. Ten (16.9%) of the 59 schools reported that students were serving and voting on 6 or more academic committees. (Table I).

Student Membership on Other Governing Bodies:-Student membership on other university/college governing bodies was also reported. (Table II). Thirteen (22%) of the 59 institutions that replied to the questionnaire indicated that students were serving on the faculty senate. Eleven (18.6%) reported student membership on an academic council (policy-making body), 24 (40.6%) indicated that students served on a planning board, and 2 schools indicated that students were members of a committee concerned with the dismissal of faculty. No schools reported student membership on a board of trustees.

More than three-fourths of the institutions that replied to the questionnaire reported student membership on some academic committee, and almost half indicated that students also serve on other university governing bodies. Therefore, based on the sample of the study, it would appear that student participation in the academic governance of American universities is not unusual.

Qualifications for Students Serving on Academic Committees:-Qualifications for students to be eligible to serve on academic committees varied consider-

ably. (Table III). Of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation (voting or non-voting) on academic committees, 36 (69.2%) indicated that academic classification (freshman, sophomore, etc.,) was immaterial. For those institutions that did use this criterion, all but one school required that the student be an upperclassman to be eligible to be a member of an academic committee. Twelve schools (23%) provided for graduate student participation.

Of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation in academic governance, 29 (55.7%) indicated that grade point average was immaterial as a qualifying condition for student service on academic committees. However, based on a 4.0 system, 12 (23%) of the 52 schools required a 2.0 average, and 2 institutions required that the student have a 3.5 GPA to be eligible to serve.

Thirty-seven (71.7%) of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation indicated that a student must be full-time to be eligible to serve on an academic committee, while 6 schools (11.5%) reported that attendance classification was immaterial. (Table III).

Selection of Students for Service on Academic Committees:-Students who serve on academic committees were usually selected by the students, acting alone. Thirty-three (63.4%) of the 52 institutions reported that this procedure was used. (Table IV). Eight schools (15.3%) indicated that selection was accomplished by joint action of the students and the administration: the typical case providing for nomination by the students and approval by the administration. Three institutions reported student selection by a student-faculty-administration process, two indicated selection by the faculty, two by the administration, and two by a faculty-student procedure.

The trend is toward the requirement that a student be a full-time undergraduate, and an upperclassman, to be eligible to serve on an academic committee. At most of the institutions, students were selected for service on academic committees through the independent action of the students. About 20% of the institutions required that such selection by the students be subject to the approval of the administration.

Historical Development:-Student membership on academic committees is generally a recent development. Of the 52 institutions reporting some student participation on academic committees, 29 (55.7%) had implemented the practice within the past three years. (Table V). Seven (13.4%) of the 52 schools, however, reported that students were serving on academic committees prior to 1960.

Initiation of the policy of student membership on academic committees most often involved the administration. (Table IV). Sixteen (30.7%) of the 52 institutions reported that the practice was originated by the administration, acting alone. Ten schools (19.2%) indicated that the policy was instigated by administration-student action, and 7 (13.4%) reported origination by joint efforts of the administration and the faculty. Five schools (9.6%) indicated that the program for student participation in academic affairs was first suggested by a student-faculty-administration combination.

Evaluation of Student Participation on Academic Committees:-Most of the institutions judged that students had made significant contribution as members of academic committees. Twenty-five (46.1%) indicated that the students had contributed 'moderately', and 18 (34.6%) reported that the contribution had been 'substantial'.

Student membership on academic committees, then, while generally a recent development, was a policy in effect at several schools prior to 1960. Initiation of such programs most often involved the administration, acting alone as reported by about one-third of the schools, and in combination with students and/or faculty at about one-half of the institutions. Contribution of the students as members of academic committees was judged as significant (moderate or substantial) by 43 of the 52 institutions.

Student Membership on Specific Committees:-The responding institutions reported student membership on a variety of academic committees. (Table VI). In addition to the student participation indicated on those committees listed on the questionnaire, institutions also reported student service on a wide variety of committees unique to their own academic organization.

Voting memberships predominated on each of the committees listed in Table VI. Of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation, 24 (46.1%) indicated that students were serving and voting on a curriculum committee. Twenty-two (42.6%) of the 52 schools reported that students were voting members on a library committee, and 21 (40.3%) indicated similar student status on a student scholarship, fellowship, and financial aid committee. Students as voting members on an admissions committee and on a calendar committee were reported by 16 institutions.

A few schools reported that students were serving on other committees on the list. For example, one school indicated that students had voting rights on a faculty recruitment committee, and 2 institutions reported students as voting members on a faculty welfare committee. No institutions reported student membership (voting or non-voting) on a faculty affairs committee.

The trend in student membership on various academic committees seems to be toward more student involvement on those committees associated

with activities that are primarily student-orientated (library, curriculum, calendar, etc.,) and less participation on committees associated with matters that are primarily related to the faculty.

Analysis of Public Institutions in the South:-A separate analysis was made of the data reported by the public institutions in the South. Of the 32 questionnaires sent to these institutions, 21 (65.6%) had been returned by January 30. Seventeen (80.9%) of the 21 institutions reported that students had membership on some academic committee. These two percentages compare closely with corresponding figures from the analysis of the data of the national sample. On the other dimensions used in the analysis of the nation's institutions, the general trends detected in the southern public institutions appeared to be consistent with the national pattern.

Analysis of The 'Non-Respondents':-An inspection was made of the list of the 26 institutions that did not reply to the questionnaire. This 'survey' analysis failed to provide any characteristic of the 'non-respondents' that would imply a counter-trend to the conclusions indicated in the analysis of the responding institutions. Therefore, there is no reason to expect that the trends detected in the analysis of the returned questionnaires would have changed significantly had all the instruments been available for consideration.

Summary

A questionnaire was forwarded to 85 institutions of higher education within the United States in an effort to determine prevalent practices concerned with student membership on academic committees, and on certain other university governing bodies. Fifty-nine of these instruments were returned, and analyzed in terms of certain concepts relevant to student participation in academic governance.

More than three-fourths of the institutions that replied to the questionnaire had a policy that provided for student membership on some academic committee, and almost half of the schools indicated that students also serve on other university bodies.

Qualifications for students to serve on academic committees varied, but the trend was toward the requirements that a student be a full-time undergraduate, and an upperclassman. At most of the institutions, students were selected for service on academic committees through the independent action of the students, but about one school in five indicated that the selection would be subject to the approval of the administration.

Student membership on academic committees is generally a recent development, but the policy was in effect at several schools prior to 1960. Initiation of student-participation policies most often involved the administration, acting independently at about one-third of the schools, and in combination with students and/or faculty at about one-half of the institutions. Student contribution as members of academic committees was judged as significant (moderate or substantial) by 43 of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation.

The trend in student membership on various academic committees seems to be toward more student involvement on those committees that are associated with activities which are primarily student-oriented, and less

involvement on those committees closely related to matters that are primarily faculty-oriented.

A separate analysis of the questionnaires that were returned by the public institutions in the South did not produce any trends that were significantly different from those detected in the national pattern.

Table I

Number of Institutions Reporting Students as Having Voting Memberships on Varying Numbers of Academic Committees

Number of Committees	Number of Universities
Students serving on	
At least one committee	45
At least two committees	38
At least three committees	26
At least four committees	21
At least five committees	18
At least six committees	14
More than six committees	10

Note.-Analysis based on data from 59 institutions that responded to the questionnaire. A total of 85 questionnaires were mailed out.

Table II

Number of Institutions

Reporting Student Membership

on Certain University Governing Bodies

Governing Body	Number of Universities
Students serving on	
Academic committees	52
Faculty Senate	13
Board of Trustees	0
Academic Council (Policy-making body)	11
Dismissal hearing committee for tenured faculty	2
Planning body (fiscal, physical plant, etc.,)	24

Note.-Analysis based on data from 59 institutions that responded to the questionnaire. A total of 85 questionnaires were mailed out.

Table III

Number of Institutions

Reporting Various Qualifications

for Student Membership on Academic Committees

Qualification	Criterion					
	Number of Institutions					
	Immaterial	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate
Academic Classification	36	1	6	10	12	12
	Immaterial	2.0/4.0	2.25/4.0	3.0/4.0		
Grade Point Average	29	12	1	2		
	Immaterial		Full-time			
Attendance Classification	6		37			

Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

Table IV

Number of Institutions Reporting Action by Various University Groups Toward Two Aspects of Student Membership on Academic Committees: Selection of Students and Initiation of Policy

University Group(s)	Number of Institutions	
	Student Selection	Policy Initiation
Students alone	33	3
Faculty alone	2	2
Administration alone	2	16
Student-faculty	2	3
Student-administration	8	10
Faculty-administration	0	7
Student-faculty-administration	3	5

Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

Table V

Number of Institutions

Reporting Various Dates of Initiation of the

Policy of Student Membership on Academic Committees

Dates Initiated	Number of Institutions
Before 1960	7
1960-61	3
1961-62	0
1962-63	2
1963-64	1
1964-65	3
1965-66	2
1966-67	9
1967-68	14
1968-69	6

Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

Table VI

Number of Institutions

Reporting Voting or Non-Voting Student

Membership on Certain Academic Committees

Academic Committee	Number of Institutions	
	Voting	Non-Voting
Admissions	16	3
Calendar	16	0
Continuing Education	3	0
Credits	3	0
Curriculum	24	3
Faculty Affairs	0	0
Faculty Welfare	2	0
Gifted Students	8	0
Library	22	4
Student Guidance	15	0
Student Recruitment	7	1
Student Scholarship, Fellowship, and Financial Aid	21	2
Teacher Education and Career	8	0
Faculty Recruitment	1	0

Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

APPENDIX A

Names And Addresses Of The
Eighty-five Institutions On The Mailing List
For
A Questionnaire Related To Student Membership On Academic Committees
East Carolina University February, 1969

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Appalachian State University
Boone, North Carolina 28608

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana 47306

Baylor University
Waco, Texas 76706

Bradley University
Peoria, Illinois 61606

Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island 02912

Butler University
4600 Sunset Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

Clemson University
Clemson, South Carolina 29631

Colorado State College
Greeley, Colorado 80631

Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Delaware State College
Dover, Delaware 19901

Drake University
26th Street and University Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50311

Duke University
Durham, North Carolina 27706

East Texas State University
Denton, Texas 76203

Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, Illinois 61920

Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Elizabeth City State College
Elizabeth City, North Carolina 27909

Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia 30322

Fisk University
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Florida Agricultural and
Mechanical University
Tallahassee, Florida 32307

Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306

Furman University
Greenville, South Carolina 29613

Georgia Southern College
Statesboro, Georgia 30458

Georgia State College
33 Gilmer Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Guilford College
Greensboro, North Carolina 27410

East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee 37601

Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana 47809

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701

Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Kutztown State College
Kutztown, Pennsylvania 19530

Lehigh University
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18015

Memphis State University
Memphis, Tennessee 38111

Miami University
Oxford, Ohio 45056

Montclair State College
Montclair, New Jersey 07043

Morehouse College
223 Chestnut Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30314

Morgan State College
Hillen Road and Cold Spring Lane
Baltimore, Maryland 21212

North Carolina Agricultural &
Technical State University
Greensboro, North Carolina 27411

North Carolina College at Durham
Durham, North Carolina 27707

Howard University
2400 Sixth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

North Carolina State University
Raleigh, North Carolina 27607

North Texas State University
Denton, Texas 76203

Old Dominion College
Norfolk, Virginia 23508

Portland State College
P. O. Box 751
Portland, Oregon 97207

Sacramento State College
6000 J. Street
Sacramento, California 95819

Sam Houston State College
Huntsville, Texas 77340

San Francisco State College
1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, California 94132

Seattle University
Seattle, Washington 98122

Shaw University
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Slippery Rock State College
Slippery Rocky, Pennsylvania 16057

South Carolina State College
Orangeburg, South Carolina 29115

Southeast Missouri State College
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701

St. Andrews Presbyterian College
Laurinburg, North Carolina 28352

St. Lawrence University
Canton, New York 13617

Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

State University of New York at
Buffalo
3435 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14214

Towson State College
Towson, Maryland 21204

Tufts University
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

Tuskegee Institute
Tuskegee Institute, Alabama 36088

University of Denver
2199 South University Boulevard
Denver, Colorado 80210

University of Detroit
4001 West McNichols Road
Detroit, Michigan 48221

University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32601

University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30601

University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04473

University of Miami
Coral Gables, Florida 33124

University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland 20740

University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

University of North Carolina
Charlotte, North Carolina 28205

University of North Carolina
Greensboro, North Carolina 27412

University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403

University of the Pacific
Stockton, California 95204

University of Pittsburgh
5th and Bigelow Streets
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213

University of Rhode Island
Kingston, Rhode Island 02881

University of Richmond
Richmond, Virginia 23173

University of San Francisco
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, California 94117

University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina 29208

University of South Florida
4202 East Fowler Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33620

University of Tennessee
Cumberland Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Vanderbilt University
21st Avenue and West End
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Virginia Polytectnic Institute
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Virginia State College
Petersburg, Virginia 23806

Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27109

Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri 63130

Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, North Carolina 28723

Wisconsin State University - Oshkosh
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

APPENDIX B

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
Office of Institutional Research
P. O. Box 2721
Greenville, North Carolina 27834

November 20, 1968

Dear Sir:

The Faculty Senate at East Carolina University is interested in securing information in regards to students serving on Academic Committees at various colleges and universities.

If you would complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope, then we could get some insight into what other schools are doing in respect to this policy. We shall be happy to forward a copy of the results of this survey to you if you would like to receive them.

Sincerely yours,

J. B. Davis

John B. Davis
Director
Institutional Research

JBD/eh

Enclosures
Questionnaire &
Return Envelope

Thank you for your assistance.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP ON ACADEMIC COMMITTEES

QUESTIONNAIRE

(If possible, we would like this questionnaire returned by Dec. 12, 1968)

Date _____

Institution Responding _____

Name of Person Responding _____

Position of Person Responding _____

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey. ____ Yes

____ No

The following questions are partitioned into six categories. Please answer, to the best of your knowledge, all of the questions in each category.

I. Do students hold membership on any academic committees at your school?

____ Yes ____ No

If "no" please return questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

If "yes" please complete remainder of questionnaire and then return in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

II. Composition of Academic Committees

Please ✓ appropriate box	Student Membership				Number On Committee		
	Yes	No	Voting	Non-Voting	Administrators	Faculty	Students
1. Admissions							
2. Calendar							
3. Continuing Educ.							
4. Credits							
5. Curriculum							
6. Faculty Affairs							
7. Faculty Welfare							
8. Gifted Students							
9. Library							
10. Student Guidance							
11. Student Recruitment							
12. Student Scholarship, Fellowship and Financial Aid							
13. Teacher Ed. and Career							
14. Faculty Recruitment							
15. Other(s) (Please Specify)							

III. Student Membership In Other School Organizations

1. Faculty Senate _____ Yes _____ No
2. Board of Trustees _____ Yes _____ No
3. Academic Council (Policy-Making body) _____ Yes _____ No
4. Dismissal hearing committee for tenured faculty _____ Yes _____ No
5. Planning body (i.e. fiscal, physical plant, etc.) _____ Yes _____ No
6. Other Areas (Please Specify) _____

_____

_____

IV. Qualification For Student Membership On Academic Committees

(Please ✓ as many as are appropriate)

1. Academic Classification ____Fr. ____Soph. ____Jr. ____Sr.

_____ Immaterial

2. Grade point average (Please Specify) _____pts. out of a _____pt. system

_____ Immaterial

3. Attendance Classification _____ Full-time _____ Part-time

_____ Undergrad. _____ Graduate

_____ Unclassified _____ Student Officer

_____ Immaterial

V. Method of Selection of Student Members

1. Elected by students _____ Yes _____ No HOW (Please Specify)

_____

_____

2. Selected by faculty _____ Yes _____ No HOW (Please Specify)

_____

_____

3. Selected by Administration _____ Yes _____ No HOW (Please Specify)

_____

_____

VI. Evaluation of Student Membership On Academic Committees

1. When was student membership initiated on your campus?

   DATE: _____

2. Who initiated student membership?

   a. Administration _____

   b. Faculty _____

   c. Students _____

   d. Other(s) (Please Specify) _____

   _____

3. Student Contribution As Members On Academic Committees

   a. Contributed nothing _____

   b. Contributed little _____

   c. Contributed moderately _____

   d. Contributed substantially _____

   e. Contributed harmful effect _____

4. Please make any comments that you might have on students serving on academic committees: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____